

COMPANY UTILIZES RAPID LEAN TRAINING

ABOUT ALLEVARD SOGEFI. Sogefi Group is a leading global supplier of original parts for the automotive industry. The company designs, develops, and produces filtration systems and flexible suspension components, as well as air management and engine cooling systems. Based in Milan, Italy, Sogefi Group has several manufacturing facilities in North America, including plants in Rochester Hills, Michigan; Montreal, Canada; Monterey, Mexico; and Prichard, West Virginia. The Prichard facility has approximately one hundred employees.

THE CHALLENGE. Since opening the doors of its West Virginia plant, Allevar Sogefi USA has continually experienced a growth in workforce and production capacity. In an effort to maintain quality, production, and a commitment to continuous improvement, regular training is necessary for new employees, as well as refresher training for existing employees. The West Virginia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (WVMEP), a NIST MEP affiliate, assists Sogefi in proctoring some of the required training.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Responding to a request from Sogefi production manager Ken Shapaka, WVMEP agreed to provide five "Lean 101: Introduction to Lean" training classes to all employees in the Prichard facility. In addition, WVMEP led Sogefi employees through a Value Stream Mapping (VSM) training class that focused on an internal material delivery train route, and offered a "Management 101 - The Basics" training workshop to select members of the Allevar Sogefi USA team. WVMEP delivered the training in a tight time window, bringing new employees up to speed quickly in Lean concepts and refreshing VSM and management concepts for select employees. The three-week engagement boosted the company's commitment to Lean Manufacturing and led to additional improvements in the assembly line supply system.

"It has been great working with WVMEP over the past 3 to 4 years. They have supported us in a variety of training for our core employees and new hires and we have seen the impact on our production floor. We are changing our culture into an automotive one, and without assistance this would have been almost impossible due to our growth."

-Ken Shapaka, Production Manager

RESULTS



100 employees trained on Lean concepts



6 improvements made to assembly line supply system



35 employees trained in VSM and Management basics



135 new employees trained in Continuous Improvement

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